

Internal Assessment English/MIL BCP (Semester 2)

Assignment 1 (25 marks)

Critically analyse the story 'The Ghost of Firozshah Bagh' taking its thematic concerns into consideration.

Answer: The critical analysis of the story may encapsulate:

- Name of the story and its author along with other publication details.
- Discussion of the other works of the author to give an overview
- Details of the plot
- Description of main characters
- Stylistic elements of the story
- Discussion over themes and its relation to social, political and cultural context.
- Relevance of the title
- Personal opinions on the story
- Final remarks on the story

Assignment 2 (25 marks)

1. Read the story and change its perspective. Rewrite the story in brief from brother's perspective.

Acacia Trees

The village chief (gowda) had four sons and a daughter. The daughter was the youngest child and her name was Putta ("Little One"). All day, everyone lovingly called her, "Putta! Putta!" Three of the sons were married. The fourth one was still a bachelor. He didn't like any of the girls he saw; they looked at many in faraway places. Finally, one day, he said, "I'll marry my sister who's right here at home," and he was quite obstinate about it. People said, "You can't do that. Don't try." But he would not listen to anyone. "If I have to marry, I'll marry only my sister. Otherwise, I won't marry at all," he said. The family thought, "Let's go along with it and arrange a wedding. Meanwhile, we'll find another girl and make her his bride on the wedding day." They set the date on an auspicious day, collected groceries and things, and prepared themselves for the wedding. But they didn't tell Putta anything about it. Relatives started arriving. There was no water in the house, not a drop. Everyone was busy with their tasks. No one had a minute to spare. So Putta herself quickly picked up two brass pitchers and went to the canal to fetch water. There, she saw a woman named Obamma, bathing in the mouth of the canal, sitting in the hollow. When she saw Putta, she called her, "Puttava, Puttava, my back is itching. Will you scratch it a little?" Putta was in a hurry. She said, "Relatives have arrived. The house is full of people, and there's not a drop of water to drink. How can I stop now and scratch your back?" She had filled her pitchers and started back when Obamma mocked her: "Marrying your own brother, ha! And you're mincing about already. Great way to marry!" Putta didn't hear her clearly. She asked, "What, what did you say? I didn't hear it right. I'll rub your back, please tell me." And she scratched Obamma's itching back. Obamma told her, "The elders in your family have decided to get you married to your own elder brother. That's the truth." Putta carried the full pitchers of water back to her home, put them on the rim of a well, and looked around. There were two acacia trees growing there on either side of the well. She climbed up one of them, and never went into the house. It was getting late and her parents came looking for her. When they saw her perched on the tree, they called out: All the areca nuts are getting hard. All the betel leaves are getting dry. All the relatives are getting up and going home. Come down, daughter. Putta answered: This mouth calls you Mother. This mouth calls you Father. Do you want this mouth to call you Mother-in-law and Father-in-law? I'll climb, climb, higher, higher, on this acacia tree. And she climbed higher. "What shall we do? We asked her to get down, and she climbed higher," they said, and went home unhappily. Her three elder brothers came and called out: The areca nuts are getting hard. The betel leaves are getting dry. The relatives are getting up and going home. Come down, sister dear. She replied: This mouth calls you Brother. Do

you want this mouth to call you Brother-in-law? And she climbed higher. They went home and her three sisters-in-law came to the tree and called out: All the areca nuts are hard. All the betel leaves are dry. All the relatives are going home. Come down, dear Sister-in-law. She answered: This mouth calls you Sister-in-law, Do you want this mouth to call you Cowife? I'll climb, I'll climb. All the relatives, some close, some distant, came to the tree and called to her. She gave them all similar replies. Finally, the brother who was going to marry her came there and called out in anger: All the areca nuts are hard. All the betel leaves are dry. All the relatives are going home. Come down, you! She replied: This mouth calls you Brother. Do you want this mouth to call you Husband? I'll climb, I'll climb. And she climbed higher. Then he thought he would go after her and bring her down; so he too climbed the acacia tree. She jumped to the other acacia that was next to it. He jumped after her, and she leapt back. Thus they leapt back and forth from one tree to another—the brother pursuing, the sister dodging his pursuit. After several leaps back and forth, she feared she would get caught. She looked down, saw the well between the trees. She thought it would be better to drown and die, and jumped straight into the well. The brother also jumped in and tried to drag her out of the water. The harder he tried, the more she resisted. After hours of struggle, they both drowned, and died in the well. The people in the house took the bodies out of the well. The relatives said, "We came for the wedding, and look at this irony, we have to stay for the funeral!" They didn't bury the dead right away, but decided to wait till dawn. The daughter appeared in the mother's dream that night and begged of her, "Mother, please don't bury both of us together. Bury him in the mound. Bury me in the field. Please." Accordingly, the family buried the son in the mound and the daughter in the field. In time, a sharp spiny bush of thorn grew over the brother's burial place. Over hers grew a great tree of sweet fruit called Bullock's Heart. One of Putta's sisters-in-law walked that way and saw the tree covered with large fruit. She wanted to eat one. But they were only halfripe. Anyway, she plucked a fine looking big fruit, took it home, and left it to ripen in an earthen vessel full of ragi grain. Days later, when she put her hand in the vessel to take out some ragi to grind, she found the fruit, the Bullock's Heart. It was good and ripe. She laid it aside while she ground the grain. But as she ground the ragi into fine flour, her eyes returned to the fruit many times. "The fruit is so lovely, lovely as a girl. How I wish it were a girl." No sooner had she said this than the fruit became a girl, sat in her lap, and told her the whole story. The fruit turned girl said, "Look how things are. My brother did evil (karma), so a spiny bush grows on his burial ground. I kept my virtue (dharma), and a fruit tree grew out of mine. And I'm here.

Answer: Upon a close reading of the story, the students are expected to:

- Comprehend the plot of the story
- Identify from whose point of view the story is written – Putta
- Create a different context in the story in a way that it states brother's reasons behind his desire - Maybe he was a homosexual and was just marrying under family pressure, he was not ready for marriage, it was just a juvenile demand.
- Change the movement of the plot and the end of the story – A different end for the brother, his marriage to another woman, he discusses his reservations with his parents and they agree to be patient, brother and sister talk to each other or maybe the brother is reincarnated as an object as a symbol of pure love.

Test (50 marks)

Question 1: Read the poem and answer the following questions:

The hills are always far away.
 He knows the broken roads and moves
 In circles tracked within his head.
 Before he wakes and has his say,
 The river which he claims he loves
 It is dry, and all the winds lie dead.

At dawn, he never sees the skies

Which, silently, are born again.
Nor feels the shadows of the night
Recline their fingers on his eyes.
He welcomes neither sun nor rain.
His landscape has no depth or height.

The city like a passion burns.
He dreams of morning walks, alone,
And floating on a wave of sand.
But still his mind its traffic turns
Away from beach and tree and stone
To kindred clamor close at hand.

- A) What is the meaning of the line: “Nor feels the shadows of the night/ Recline their fingers on his eyes.”

Answer: The answer can address the nature of life in urban space and how people are busy to the extent of not even noticing the rise of the day or fall of the night. It can also include the aspect of loneliness prevalent in the poem.

- B) Identify the poetic device used in the line: “But still his mind its traffic turns”

Answer: Metaphor

- C) Whom does ‘he’ refer to in the poem?

Answer: ‘He’ refers to the common man living in an urban city, detached from the charms of nature or of life as he lives his life bound by his own problems and hectic schedule.

- D) Analyze the picture of urban life that the poet draws in the poem

Answer: Urban life as hectic and all consuming, detached from natural light and glory, lacks beauty, alienated landscape, filled with loneliness, and where people yearn for oneness with nature.

Question 2: Read the passage and answer the following questions:

Alive, the foxes inhabited a world my father made for them. It was surrounded by a high guard fence, like a medieval town, with a gate that was padlocked at night. Along the streets of this town were ranged large, sturdy pens. Each of them had a real door that a man could go through, a wooden ramp along the wire, for the foxes to run up and down on, and a kennel — sometimes like a clothes chest with airholes — where they slept and stayed in winter and had their young. There were feeding and watering dishes attached to the wire in such a way that they could be emptied and cleaned from the outside. The dishes were made of old tin cans, and the ramps and kennels of odds and ends of old lumber.

Everything was tidy and ingenious; my father was tirelessly inventive and his favourite book in the world was Robinson Crusoe. He had fitted a tin drum on a wheelbarrow, for bringing

water down to the pens. This was my job in the summer, when the foxes had to have water twice a day. Between nine and ten o'clock in the morning, and again after supper, I filled the drum at the pump and trundled it down through the barnyard to the pens, where I parked it, and filled my watering can and went along the streets. Laird came too, with his little cream and green gardening can, filled too full and knocking against his legs and slopping water on his canvas shoes. I had the real watering can, my father's, though I could only carry it three-quarters full. The foxes all had names, which were printed on a tin plate and hung beside their doors. They were not named when they were born, but when they survived the first year's pelting and were added to the breeding stock.

Naming them did not make pets out of them, or anything like it. Nobody but my father ever went into the pens, and he had twice had blood-poisoning from bites. When I was bringing them their water they prowled up and down on the paths they had made inside their pens, barking seldom — they saved that for night times, when they might get up a chorus of community frenzy--but always watching me, their eyes burning, clear gold, in their pointed, malevolent faces. They were beautiful for their delicate legs and heavy, aristocratic tails and the bright fur sprinkled on dark down their back — which gave them their name — but especially for their faces, drawn exquisitely sharp in pure hostility, and their golden eyes. Besides carrying water I helped my father when he cut the long grass, and the lamb's quarter and flowering money-musk, that grew between the pens. He cut with they scythe and I raked into piles. Then he took a pitchfork and threw fresh-cut grass all over the top of the pens to keep the foxes cooler and shade their coats, which were browned by too much sun.

My father did not talk to me unless it was about the job we were doing. In this he was quite different from my mother, who, if she was feeling cheerful, would tell me all sorts of things — the name of a dog she had had when she was a little girl, the names of boys she had gone out with later on when she was grown up, and what certain dresses of hers had looked like — she could not imagine now what had become of them. Whatever thoughts and stories my father had were private, and I was shy of him and would never ask him questions. Nevertheless I worked willingly under his eyes, and with a feeling of pride. One time a feed salesman came down into the pens to talk to him and my father said, "Like to have you meet my new hired hand." I turned away and raked furiously, red in the face with pleasure.

A) From whose point of view the story is being told

Answer: The story is told from a young girl's point of view.

B) How does the story show men's work as distinct from women's work?

Answer: As reflective in the story, men and women are bound in their traditional roles. Women, as suggested by mother's character, work inside the house while the men work outside. Young girl in the story understands the work and enjoys working outside the house, willingly helping her father while the brother squanders around. Even after hard work, the father does not appreciate her efforts for simply being a girl. The distanced relationship between the girl and the father is quite apparent which is a reflection of the gender stereotypes.

C) Locate the errors in the passage and rewrite it accordingly.

- a) The other day we discuss(ed) the setting up of the Debating Club in our school. b) We talked about the club as to how many students would be interested in it. When we began to talk about the rules and regulations which would govern the club. c) we couldn't reach an agreement and began to argue. d) Finally, our English teacher had to be informed, and she came and said: "Please don't fight like little children. Let's have a mature discussion and come to a consensus."